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# Alternative Fuel Vehicle Roadshow stops in Albany

## Albany hosts GA Public Service Commission traveling forum

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Two attendees to Wednesday's Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow in Albany take a look under the hood of a Dodge 2500 pickup that runs on compressed natural gas that is used by Atlanta Gas Light Co. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)



State and local officials gathered in Albany Wednesday to take part in the Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow presented by the Georgia Public Service Commission. Pictured, from left, are State Rep Darrel Ealum, Georgia Public Service Commissioner Tim Echols, and State Rep. Winifred Dukes. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)



This Modern Gas truck that runs on propane is one of many alternative fuel vehicles on display Wednesday at the Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow held at the government building in downtown Albany. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)



This Ford Interceptor, used by law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Georgia, runs on compressed natural gas and was one of several vehicles on display in downtown Albany Wednesday during the Georgia Public Service Commission's Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)



Georgia Public Service Commissioner Tim Echols leads a discussion around clean energy during the Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow held Wednesday in Albany. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)

ALBANY — City and state officials in Southwest Georgia got a glimpse of a potential, environmentally safe future when the Georgia Public Service Commission presented its Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow in Albany Wednesday.

Held at the downtown government building on Pine Avenue, the roadshow gave area fleet managers and officials an opportunity to learn about the benefits of using environmentally friendly vehicles such as those run on propane, bio-fuels, natural gas, electricity and compressed natural gas.

In addition to hearing testimonials from representatives from other municipalities in Georgia, attendees also got to take part in discussions about each fuel type and get an up-close look at vehicles that utilize alternative fuels, such as the Nissan Leaf, the Chevy Volt, the Kia



Soul, and the Ford C-Max Energi that run on electricity; as well as vehicles other cities and counties in Georgia are operating that run on compressed natural gas and propane.

Georgia Public Service Commissioner Tim Echols, who has championed the Alternative Fuel Vehicles Roadshow, said the state's investment in solar energy is on the rise.

"When I came on the commission in 2011 we had just a little tiny sliver of solar power in Georgia," Echols said. "Georgia's the seventh largest solar state now. In just five years we've moved way up to the front."

Echols said he believes solar energy could have a considerable impact on southern Georgia and perhaps become a catalyst for economic growth.

"Solar in southwest Georgia is really taking off," Echols said. "There are people who have land that they needed to do something with and they're going to be making money off of (solar) now. I think with what's happening to cities like Macon and Albany, with industries leaving, it devastates. We need something to be able to give the economy a little bit of jolt. So, if we can send some of this solar down here that's really helpful."

Echols is not banking on just that solar energy to make a difference. He also praised the creation of the new biomass plant being built by Constellation Energy at Procter & Gamble's Albany site, and the City of Albany's recent decision to build a compressed natural gas filling station.

Also in attendance at the road show were State Reps. Winfred Dukes and Darrel Ealum, who each shared their excitement over the future of clean and alternative fuels in south Georgia and Albany.

"I definitely needed to have a good understanding as to the direction we are going with alternative fuel," Dukes said. "Basically we needed to know because we make public policy. And in making public policy we have to be able to come up with things that work for Georgia, particularly those people that we represent."

Ealum discussed the City of Albany's plans to build the compressed natural gas filling station and how important that could be to the residents of Albany and Dougherty County.

"Albany really is leading the way in our area," said Ealum. "The city is moving toward a \$2 million station. We're talking about the school board and the city working together buying school buses as well as city vehicles, so we are really moving ahead. We produce fuel ourselves so we can purchase from ourselves. It makes economic sense to set up a program where are consumer the products we already produce."

Albany Mayor Dorothy Hubbard, who was on hand to welcome guests to the presentation, also discussed the compressed natural gas station, pointing out that the station and the buses that will utilize it will have a major impact on the city both environmentally and economically.

"We're at a point where we're building a compressed natural gas station so it makes sense for us to enter into this discussion so we can see how much more, other than the buses that we've already ordered, cost savings it could mean for us," said Hubbard. "We're here talking about the possibility of saving funds, and you know we've been looking at cost cutting measures here in our city, so we're talking about saving funds, we're talking about cutting



emissions, and making our environment cleaner, so anytime we can do those things, we're on the right track."

To learn more about the Alternative Fuel Vehicles Road Show, visit [www.afvroadshow.com](http://www.afvroadshow.com).



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**Rusty Shackleford** · Top Commenter · Guerrilla engineer at Revolutionary

But you do realize that while it's a cleaner option here the action of extracting the gas is causing devastating pollution in other areas. Does the end justify the mean? Do you care? My assumption is no but I would love to hear some opinion on this.

Reply · Like · June 18 at 7:18am



**Brad McEwen** · Top Commenter · Staff Writer at The Albany Herald

Good point and I do care. This article was not the place for me share opinions as it is a news article where the purpose was for me to report what happened, who was there and what they said the reason for being there was. I invite you to please write a letter to the editor expressing you views as I'm certain there are many others who feel the same way.

Reply · Like · June 18 at 8:41am



**Rusty Shackleford** · Top Commenter · Guerrilla engineer at Revolutionary

Brad McEwen Thanks, I appreciate your response! Natural gas extraction is extremely hazardous to extract for everyone involved and that is far from opinion sir. It is fact. Not knocking your article but I was truly miffed that you didn't ask the Mayor (what with the hullabalu about the placement of the Sabal Trail and all) her opinion on how fracking ruins those that are exposed to it in order to enrich those who aren't and the dangers of the actual pipes exploding and the risk v. safety in order to install a compressed natural gas station. I consider these paramount questions that could have fit into this article well but to each his own. You guys COULD go deeper but...

Reply · Like · June 18 at 8:51am



**Tim G. Echols** · Public Service Commissioner at State of Georgia

Rusty, the EPA has recently given the green light to fracking in most instances. I have visited a fracking site myself and looked at the water usage, treatment, etc. It is far less intrusive than I thought.

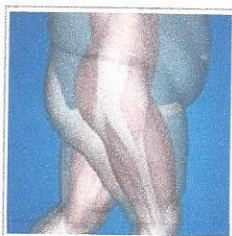
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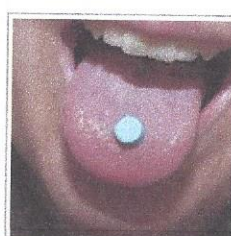
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